

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 and 3-23 are pending in this application. Claim 2 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, Claims 1 and 3-7 are amended, and new Claims 9-23 are added by the present amendment. Amended Claims 1 and 3-7 and new Claims 9-23 are supported by the original claims, and therefore add no new matter.

In the outstanding Official Action, Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogami et al (U.S. Pat. No. 4,693,211, hereinafter “Ogami”) in view of Granneman et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,461,439, hereinafter “Granneman”). However, Claims 2-8 were objected to as dependent on a rejected base claim, but otherwise were indicated as including allowable subject matter if re-written in independent form.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that Claims 2-8 include allowable subject matter.

With regard to the rejection of Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Ogami in view of Granneman, this rejection is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 includes the subject matter of canceled Claim 2, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Consequently, Claim 1 (and Claims 3-8 dependent therefrom) is believed to be patentable over Ogami in view of Granneman.

New Claim 9 includes the subject matter of original Claim 1 and original Claim 3, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Consequently, Claim 9 (and Claims 10-14 dependent therefrom) is believed to be patentable over Ogami in view of Granneman.

New Claim 15 includes the subject matter of original Claim 1 and original Claim 4, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Consequently, Claim 15 (and

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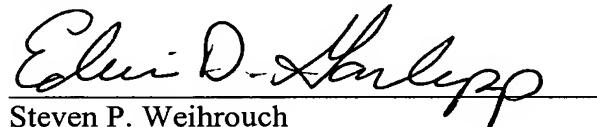
Claims 16-19 dependent therefrom) is believed to be patentable over Ogami in view of Granneman.

New Claim 20 includes the subject matter of original Claim 1 and original Claim 5, which was indicated as including allowable subject matter. Consequently, Claim 20 (and Claims 21-23 dependent therefrom) is believed to be patentable over Ogami in view of Granneman.

Accordingly, in view of the present amendment, no further issues are believed to be outstanding and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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